

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENTI 00500 020958Z  
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11  
IO-13 ACDA-12 /091 W  
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R 020656Z MAY 78  
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9226  
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK  
AMCONSUL HONG KONG  
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 0500

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: EPAP PBOR EALR PINS MOPS LA VM

SUBJECT: REPORTS OF SRV/LPDR BORDER CLASHES AND TIMBER POACHING

REF: 77 VIENTIANE 0064

1. A LAO STUDENT WHO WAS IN TURN TOLD BY A STUDENT FROM THE VIENGSAI MILITARY CAMP TOLD AN EMBASSY OFFICER APRIL 30 THAT LAO PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY (LPLA) AND VIETNAMESE TROOPS HAD CLASHED ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS ALONG THE LPDR/SRV BORDER DURING 1977. THE SOURCE SAID THAT THE LAO GOVERNMENT WAS REPORTEDLY SECRETIVE AND DID NOT OFFICIALLY ACKNOWLEDGE THE CONFRONTATIONS. THE SOURCE SAID THAT THE CLASHES REPORTEDLY OCCURED ALONG THE BORDER IN PHONGSALY AND KHAMMOUNE PROVINCES. HE SAID THAT IN THE CASE OF THE CLASHES IN KHAMMOUNE PROVINCE, LPLA TROOPS WERE REPORTEDLY DEFENDING LAO FORESTERS FROM SRV ARMY TIMBER POACHERS.

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2. A UN EXPERT SAID THAT THE EIGHT SWEDISH DONATED PORTABLE SAWMILLS THAT HAD BEEN "LOST IN THE PORT OF HAIPHONG" SINCE EARLY 1976 (REF TEL) HAD BEEN "FOUND" IN LATE 1977 IN KHAMMOUNE PROVINCE WHERE THE VIETNAMESE WERE USING THEM TO CUT TIMBER. THE SAME SOURCE SAID THAT HE DAD HEARD STORIES THAT THE VIETNAMESE WERE ALSO POACHING TIMBER IN

NORTHERN LAOS (REFTEL).

3. A LAO STUDENT QUOTED A HIGH RANKING RELATIVE IN THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AS ADMITTING THAT THERE WERE STILL OUTSTANDING SRV/LPDR BORDER DISPUTES. THE INTERIOR OFFICIAL REPORTEDLY SAID THAT THE LAO GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT MAKE THE SAME MISTAKE AS THE KAMPUCHEANS HAD DONE BY AGGRESSIVELY CONTESTING SRV BORDER VIOLATIONS. INSTEAD THE LPDR WOULD WAIT UNTIL IT WAS ECONOMICALLY STRONGER SO THAT IT COULD NEGOTIATE WITH THE SRV FROM A POSITION OF STRENGTH.

4. COMMENT: GIVEN THE LPDR'S DEPENDENT "SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP" WITH THE SRV, IT IS PROBABLE THAT THE LAO WOULD LIKE TO PLAY DOWN ANY CLASHES WITH THE SRV. ALSO GIVEN THE SRV'S ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, THE REPORT THAT SRV TROOPS WERE POACHING LAO LUMBER IS A BELIEVABLE STORY. THE REPORTS OF ARMED CLASHES BETWEEN LPLA AND SRV TROOPS THUS SOUND TO US LIKE MINOR SKIRMISHES IN WHICH THE LAO WERE LOCALLY DEFENDING THEIR FORESTS AGAINST "UNOFFICIAL" POACHERS. ROBERTS

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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** REPORTS, TIMBER, BORDER INCIDENTS, THEFTS  
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**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Review Markings:**  
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